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ABSTRACT

This handbook sets out guidelines for the administration of resource centers for schools in the Northwest Territories, Canada, offers definitions of suitable and adequate resource services, and may be used as a planning tool for management staff. Four major topics are covered: (1) jurisdictional roles and responsibilities of the Department of Education and individual boards of education; (2) educational resource services offered by the Department of Education; (3) educational resource services offered by boards of education in the areas of program support services, technical support services, consultant services, research and development services, and cooperative and collaborative services; and (4) operational guidelines for all resource centers for administration and financing, staffing, and the facility. (ALF)

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A HANDBOOK FOR RESOURCE CENTRE STANDARDS AND SERVICES

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Introduction

Under the terms of the Education Act, clauses 3(4)(f), 37(q), 53-12-(m) and 53-13-(1)(d) the Minister, the Boards of Education and the Divisional Boards of Education are required to provide " — suitable and adequate — resource facilities and materials" for schools in the N.W.T.

This handbook sets out guidelines for the administration of resource centres. It offers a definition of suitable and adequate resource services, and may be used as a planning tool for management staff.

Jurisdictional Roles and Responsibilities

The Department

The Department of Education is responsible for providing central educational resource services for the benefit of the entire NWT education system. Primarily, these services are provided in support of all divisional activities within the department headquarters, plus those services which are common to the needs of all boards (page 2).

The Boards

Each Board of Education and Divisional Board of Education is responsible for providing educational resource services to its schools and to any activities developed in support of its school programs. The extent of the services and the size of the facility are governed by the board's overall goals in program delivery (page 3).

Educational Resource Services: Department

Departmental resource services are delivered primarily in support of departmental programs and objectives, and in support of Board programs in so far as these programs are common to the needs of all Boards.

Departmental resource services can be broadly described as:

1. Publishing and distribution of all publications, print and non-print, produced by the Department and acting as a repository for same.
2. Holding special collections of film and video resources of common interest to all boards and the Department and which would ordinarily extend beyond the financial and program scope of any one individual Board, eg. professional development, guidance, special needs, women's issues, careers and apprenticeship.
3. Providing leadership and co-ordination to initiatives in educational resources common to the interests of all Boards
4. Co-ordinating meetings and in service training sessions beneficial to the shared and common interests of all resources staff.
5. Planning and co-ordinating group acquisitions among all resource centres.

Educational Resource Services: Boards

Board operated resource centres both supplement and complement the effectiveness of services provided in each school. They help eliminate excessive duplication of specialized resources and make available to staff a much larger collection of curriculum and professional materials than any individual school could afford.

Board resource services can be broadly categorized into the following areas:

Program Support Services

A resource centre assists teachers, libraries, consultants and administrators in improving the quality of instruction and helps in the development of educational programs by matching learning resources to learner needs and interests. This may be achieved by holding a collection of:

1. professional resource materials
2. reference materials, bibliographies
3. curriculum guides and programs
4. aids for use in selecting materials for purchase
5. archival material of importance to the jurisdiction
6. film and video titles
7. program related materials
8. media resources required by Board Staff for workshops, demonstrations and in service training.
9. displays and preview collections of professional and learning resources, and
10. provide training in the use of learning resources.

Technical Support Services

A resource centre provides technical support services in the production and reproduction of resource materials, and assists with access to and use of resources.

These services usually include:

1. cataloguing and processing print and non-print materials
2. maintaining and repairing equipment and materials or ensuring that this service is available elsewhere.
3. circulation and distribution of materials
4. production services for film, video, photographs, etc, or ensuring this service is available elsewhere.
5. reproduction from master copies (copyright cleared).
6. printing, or ensuring that this service is available elsewhere.
7. preparing and providing recommended lists of resource materials.
8. providing training in the development of resources.
9. offering advice and assistance to school resource personnel.

Consultant Services

A resource centre provides leadership and consultant services to schools within the jurisdiction and acts in a partnership capacity to:

1. select and purchase appropriate learning resources
2. establish policies and procedures for managing resources.
3. organize resources for efficient access, sharing and retrieval
4. design and produce new resources
5. interpret and communicate resource centre needs to principals, consultants and supervisors.

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Research and Development Services

A resource centre maintains an ongoing plan for research and assessment of need in order to provide resources appropriate to current program delivery within the jurisdiction, by:

1. providing plans on how needs can best be met.
2. preparing plans for long-term growth.
3. preparing policies on selection of resources and financial plans for the acquisition of resources, for consideration by supervisory staff.
4. regularly communicating with schools and administrators on new developments in resources, technological change and their impact on program delivery.
5. assisting with system-wide evaluation of use and effectiveness of resources.
6. maintaining liaison with producers and distributors of resources, particularly non-print, within the private and public sectors.
7. acting as an information source for the benefit of all resource centres in the areas of technological change, new resources, recommended lists of materials, etc.
8. producing catalogues of resources held on inventory for the benefit of all Boards.

Co-operative and Collaborative Services

A resource centre maintains open and ongoing communication with other resource centres within the NWT for purposes of improving expertise, developing common goals and helping others by:

1. sharing information and expertise
2. developing inter-library loans, where feasible.
3. resource-sharing with local public libraries and other agencies.
4. attending meetings and inservice training sessions with others involved in resource services.

5. collaborating in group acquisitions of resources common to jurisdictions where economies of scale provide cost savings.
6. participating in networks that share cataloguing and information.

Operational Guidelines for all Resource Centres

1. Administration and Financing

Resource centres are designed to provide a broad range of service to a complete jurisdiction, hence their administration is placed within the directorate of each jurisdiction. Financing of resource centres is placed within the overall directorate budget to provide flexibility in planning for resource support of program change and growth.

Teachers, principals and consultants play a major role in defining needs and setting priorities for acquisitions. The resource centre co-ordinator's role, in managing the budget, is one of balancing new acquisitions against ongoing services, plus meeting directions for change from senior administration.

2. Staffing

Educational resource services are an integral part of program planning and delivery, hence the person responsible for the resource centre shall have a strong background in educational resources and be given frequent opportunity for ongoing training in technological changes and program changes as these occur. This person shall be responsible for what goes into a resource centre, and its relationships with those responsible for programs. The day-to-day delivery of services may be accomplished by a more junior position with training in clerical/library/technical and organizational skills.

3. The Facility

The size of any resource centre is governed by the size of the jurisdiction and the full extent of the services it is prepared to offer or make available through other means. There are, however, certain basic features which are common to all resource centres and which have a bearing on their internal design, vis.

1. A print publications storage area
2. A non-print publications storage area
3. Electronic equipment area
4. Administration area
5. Workroom area (receiving, shipping, etc.)
6. Multi-purpose area (for screenings, planning, materials development, displays, etc.)
7. Front counter area

Additional features which may be included and which are influenced by the overall needs of the jurisdiction are:

1. Publications design, graphics and printing area.
2. Computer learning materials development
3. Studio production area
4. Teachers centre.